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THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION —
A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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AUGUST 1953

Photo: Liza-Leigh Hunt

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
Big Bend, Wisconsin

Walter M. Trapp, Architect
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT
Official Publication
WISCONSIN ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION
A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN
INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects

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Wisconsin Architects Association Hears Words of Wisdom

A special feature, bringing to a close the Summer Caucus held by the Wisconsin Architects Association at the Nakoma Country Club in Madison, on Friday, August 14, was the following after-dinner talk by Chicago Architect Harry Schweikher. After reading his address, you will find a brief history of the speaker.

THE ADDRESS

About two years ago, in an essay on Function and Expression in Architecture, Lewis Mumford wrote, in part, "By now, many architects have become aware of a self-imposed poverty: in absorbing the lessons of the machine and in learning to master new forms of construction, they have . . . neglected the valid claims of the human personality. In properly rejecting antiquated symbols, they have also rejected human needs, interests, sentiments . . . the time has come to integrate objective functions with subjective functions: to balance off mechanical facilities with biological needs, social commitments, and personal values."

The counsel is still timely. The critical inspection from which it derives seems inaccurate, however, in one detail: that the poverty — quite apparent — is "self-imposed", that is to say, wilfully so, which is the implication given. For it is contradictory and improbable that imposing something upon oneself could be done in ignorance of the imposition.

Those men whose buildings have become the principle butt of such criticism are few. Among these in particular one would find with further inspection a continuing, conscious effort toward making mechanical and structural function subordinate to personal values. The rest — a majority — may be excused, unfortunately, because of ignorance. In neither group may it be said that there has been a conscious, wilful, self-imposed poverty.

It has been agreed for some time among architects that it is the function of a building to give shelter from the elements, to endure against them and against time, and to fulfill a prescribed purpose.

Some would stop here, incapable of going further even though feeling that more was needed. Others, the majority, would stop because they share the *popular, mass* conviction that function, held to structural and mechanical efficiency and tied to economy, is the only desirable virtue: the *common* sense of pragmatism — and only slightly less virtuous: bodily comfort and convenience.

A few — increasing in number but still a minority — agree with Mumford in action as well as in thought, in striving to bring out of the visual aspects of structure and mechanics, an expression, considerably less tangible, of human values. They add another integral:

(Continued on Page 4)

Meeting Schedule, Sept. 1953 through Jan. 1954
Milwaukee Division
of the
Wisconsin Architects Association
A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

Fritz von Grossmann ..... Chairman, PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Thomas Kemp — Donald Grieb
C. W. Burroughs — Abe Tannenbaum
Eugene Jurenec — H. Carl Schulze

September 16, 1953 **WEDNESDAY** **Corporate Meeting**

Place: City Club 6 P.M.

Subject: Covering three suggestions for general discussion, namely
(a) A review of interesting developments of the A.I.A. Convention in Seattle,
(b) Summary of the work to date of the FEE Standardization Committee,
(c) A discussion of increased activity for new members — Corporate, Associate, and Junior Associate.

Chairman ..... Herbert W. Bradley
Assisted by: Thomas Kemp, Paul Brust, Leigh Hunt

October 15, 1953 **THURSDAY** **Corporate Meeting**

Place: Boulevard Inn, Ranch Room 6 P.M.

Subject: Reflections and Encounters with the New Building Code
(a) What are our objections and disagreements, and correspondingly,
(b) What would our constructive criticism be.

Chairman ..... Al Grellinger
Assisted by: C. W. Burroughs, Walter Pollatz

November 10, 1953 **TUESDAY** **Feature Meeting**

Place: Tripoli Country Club — Ladies Invited

Dutch Treat Cocktails 6:30 to 7:00 P.M.
Dinner: Prime Ribs of Beef — $3.50 with tip

Suggested Guest Speaker (a) ..... EERO SAARINEN
Subject (a) ..... MILWAUKEE'S NEW WAR MEMORIAL
Suggested Guest Speaker (b) ..... BERNARD THOMSON
Subject (b) ..... THE ARCHITECT AND THE LAW
Chairman ..... Leroy Riegel
Assisted by: Abe Tannenbaum, Maynard Meyer, Eugene Jurenek

December 7, 1953 **MONDAY** **Corporate Meeting**

Place: City Club 6 P.M.

Subject ..... Architects and Public Relations
Chairman ..... Roger Herbst
Assisted by: Don Grieb, Walter Dommann, T. L. Eschweiler

January 8, 1954 **FRIDAY** **Corporate Meeting**

Place: Plankinton House

Subject ..... This Business of Architecture
Chairman ..... Herbert Grassold
Assisted by: Carl Schulze, Herbert Ebling, Ray Steffan, Ralph Kloppenberg

(Continued from Page 2)

the consonance of these values with practicality. The result, when successful is, at least, good building.

To know something of the difficulties of this group it is necessary to discuss further the work of the majority, the attitude, the probable cause, a possible remedy.

The majority of architects are, it is safe to assume, quite unaware of doing anything less than giving expression to human values; for are they not to accept the values given to them, underlined, by a succession of clients? How better define human values than by selection from emphases, reiterated over and over again by each client and by client after client: all possible *usable* space, low cost, inexpensive (consequently easy) maintenance, indefinite durability, and the ever-present concomitants of convenience and comfort? Who, in these circumstances, will look further and to what purpose?

If there are other values — human ones, what are they and how are they justifiable in the expression of practical building?

There are, of course, other values: spiritual concerns, contemplation, thought in general — both objective and subjective — literature, art. Some of these take the tangible form of books, paintings, sculpture, music.

But what tangibles must a building have to express human values?

First of all, that quality (Wright has been most frequently successful in attaining it) of the building that makes it an intermediary between man and his environment. In addition, there are the qualities of noteworthy proportion and refinement of detail both being a part of artistic evaluation; scale adapted to human action; color; warmth; a total experience that is a sum of continuing experiences, intectual, emotional, perceptive, livable.

This is not to say that all of these need be a part of a building's expression at one and the same time. Warmth, for example, may be the exact antithesis to a desired expression in a given instance. It is only important that the architect be aware in the design process of the existence of all, and that he work *through all* of these to the attainment of a successful expression of any.

In the main, it cannot be said that, except for minorities, these values have significance. Certainly they are difficult to express architecturally, however well defined in concept. Hence, it is not often profitable to the architect to indulge them.

The popular insistence is that the material values be adhered to. Structural requirements and mechanical devices only have real significance in the building account book.

Furthermore, it would appear that, apart from practicality, the modern trend is to find in material values, personal ones. Practical economy, push-buttons, comfort become ends in themselves valued for their accomplishment or possession alone and not for what they afford for subjective living. Their pursuit gives little time for anything else. It is endless, self-renewing: protection to protectors, styling, re-styling, ad infinitum.

There is, in addition, and in alliance with the "romance with pragmatism" a certain establishment of the commonplace. It fits in especially well with standardization in which everyone is urged to have what everyone else has. Experiments in new expression are disdained. "To be different is to be indecent" — as Gassett reminds us.

However beneficent in raising the average existence level, the tendency is to crush beneath an overall mediocrity all "that is excellent, individual, qualified and select." (Gassett) In going along with this current, the average architect may be accused of cynicism, ignorance or just plain laziness, but he cannot be held to be guilty of self-imposed poverty.

Obviously, standardization, mass production, must have their limits if they are to work at all. The handbooks for steel or wood sections give to the architect, sufficient indication of this. Even here, Mies and some others have used the limitations of the rolled section but discarded the handbooks.

But need we submit to standardizations set up by so-called "buyer demand" and third-hand interpretations of advertising or sales departments? How quickly shall we all buckle under the overwhelming mass of manufactured mediocrity?

It is expensive of time, money, and physical stamina to combat forever from commission to commission; wall, floor, and ceiling panels in every conceivable imitative aspect; lighting fixtures, fluted, scrolled, and rolled; hardware — that bemused trade — in knobs, locks, bars, pulls and hinges of all styles, all ornaments — and rarely fitting, actually fitting anything. And what new debasements will be thought of by the manufacturers of domestic plumbing equipment, of ranges, refrigerators, washers and such? And is it not time for even accepted — and fairly acceptable — structural standards to be reappraised in terms of extended limits, increase in varieties of sizes and shapes — many long ago made possible by new markets, new processes, tools, tolerances and allowable stresses?

The plethora of hopelessly out-dated, miserably designed and often ill-fitting building equipment and material plus the timidity of manufacturers in venturing retooling for fear of losing a market or decreasing a profit is, in great part the true imposition of poverty.

Perhaps the most deplorable of all is the almost total loss of "faith in work". It permeates the classroom, the draftingroom, the field of construction. Pride in one's trade, in one's craft, if it has not gone, is going. More pay, less work, as ends in themselves repudiate the personal satisfaction in work well done, skillfully done. It may be true as Maritain has said that "the artist who has the habit of art and the quivering hand produces an imperfect work but retains a faultless virtue". The architect's hand, however, once the design leaves the drawing board, is that of the builder and the craftsman. If these have the quivering hand and are indifferent to art or have the habit of indifference, no amount of creative ingenuity will overcome the resulting shabbiness. There will be no virtue, only vacuity.

The development of architectural trim and other ornamental coverings that could be applied over structure appear to have anticipated some such de-

bacle. It has become, over the years, so decreasingly important for structure to be faultlessly assembled that whole industries have grown up out of the need to cover up shoddy work. The clutter of available coverings in wood, metal, paper, plastics and synthetics is awesome. (It is particularly fitting that such coverings used for "style" changes by the manufacturers of automobiles, domestic and commercial appliances and equipment — even industrial — should be termed by those same manufacturers, "shrouds".)

In the work of fitting the cover to the structure, contractors now find it expeditious to use the platoon system: one team puts the structure together, a second covers it over. Each is indifferent to the work of the other except insofar as the quantity of its work is added to or subtracted from. The covering platoon is no longer necessarily skilled or adept at its work. Every effort is made to obviate this necessity. "Improvements" are constantly being made: the use of tools requires skill, time, money. Both the frequency of use and the tools themselves can be reduced — sometimes eliminated: snap-ons, slipons, glue-ons take their place. The devices and gadgets multiply.

Unified and vociferous objections from an architectural majority might get a hearing but the "mess of imprecision" has become so vast that years will pass before any improvement can become discernable.

Meanwhile, buildings are to be built. Is it any wonder that some should look for ways of compelling good workmanship without the need for appeal and within a pragmatic framework?

The means is to be found in an expression of structure, so simple in form and detail as to suggest a return, for a time, to austerity. There is no cult implied here, only as Barzum says, "a different order of mind, still wedded to practicality . . . but . . . stripping every purpose bare and seeking the minimum means to attain it — an austerity program not simply for economy but for revivifying enthusiasm and faith in work".

"Simplification, Gide has said, is the way beauty is slowly acquired. To be unable to admire economy, the suppression of the useless [is a] sure indication of a limited intelligence that perceives only details, does not go beyond them, and, thinking it is composing, merely juxtaposes".

Simplification of structure means a reduction to basic form, that is, that least denominator in a building needed to fit it to its purpose and to those who use it: the barest form necessary to fulfill its function and to express the required attributes of human use and values.

The enclosure of space throughout architectural history has been a part of the design process. It has become increasingly simple, especially since the industrial revolution and the advent of steel sections, bars and cables, to embrace or leap over, larger and larger sections of it.

Rectilinear form, because of the simplicity of connections and identity of spanning and supporting members, may be, in most instances, the most promising structure economically. It is, in addition, as an aesthetic, most readily seen and understood by the builder and the worker, hence refinement of proportion and detail can well begin here as Mies has done.

But by no means is simplicity to be attained only through the rectangle. Saarinen's recent handkerchief dome, Novicki's and Severud's handsome arch and catenary arena are examples of simplicity in curvilinear form. Nervi's folded slabs and three-dimensional vaults and domes and Fuller's micrometric tetrahedrons and octahedrons promise unending exploration for the creative mind.

This direction offers such an infinity of forms that can be wedded still to simplicity and economy that there is room for all. (It is ridiculous, of course, to select from this infinity as it unfolds any form as having political or national affiliations.)

Once we get structure out in the open, skillfully assembled, and with it the mechanics of a building, expressing these as directly as they in turn must express the building, we shall be able better to observe, to understand, and to learn how to express with them the more difficult human values.

Along the way a re-evaluation of building types may be the outcome. In place of arbitrarily characterizing buildings in types identified as residential, institutional, commercial and industrial — a kind of progression from "shaggy dog" to "glassical box", now popularly accepted — it will be both more sensible and more sensitive to establish building character directly in the terms of human occupancy, use and subjective values, relation of these to land and environment, and the containment of all within a practical economy. Individualism in expression of the building and of and for its occupant, rather than being suppressed, will be emphasized.

The resolution of structural and mechanical frameworks into building must, to succeed, remain continually and consistently simple. The engineering theory making such simplicity possible may on the contrary become increasingly complex.

Architects cannot know all the detail that there is to know now, let alone what is to come. Nevertheless, they must keep pace. The principals, at least, of structure, mechanics, electronics, acoustics must be known.

The hired or consulted expert may supply the technical details, but effective, creative action will depend as much upon a thorough background of structural and mechanical principals as upon the "habit of art". This is the minimum vocabulary needed to persuade industry and worker in building, convincingly, to new ventures. This is the language, these are the symbols, necessary to an expression of human values.

* * *

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Mr. Schweikher, whose appointment became effective July 1, will become Chairman of Yale's Department of Architecture in the Division of the Arts upon the retirement next February of Professor George Howe, who has been departmental chairman since January 1, 1950.

The new faculty member will continue private practice as senior partner of the firm of Schweikher and Elting, of Roselle, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, and also will open offices in New Haven.

He is probably best known throughout the nation as a designer of houses in a contemporary and present idiom, but also has been designer and architect, with his partner Winston Elting, of churches, housing projects and other private and public buildings.

In addition, he has served as Visiting Critic and Lecturer at several of the leading architectural schools. His own professional works have been exhibited frequently over a 20-year period and have been the subject of articles in Life, Architectural Forum, Architectural Record, Progressive Architecture, Better Homes and Gardens, House and Garden, American Home, and in various books on architecture.

In commenting on the appointment, Professor Charles H. Sawyer, Director of Yale's Division of the Arts, said, "Yale is extremely fortunate in persuading Paul Schweikher to assume the leadership of its Department of Architecture. A graduate of this school, a member of its faculty at intervals over the past six years, he is well equipped in background, experience, and ability to provide the leadership and inspiration a professional school requires."

Mr. Schweikher was born on July 28, 1903, in Denver, Colo., the son of the late Frederick Schweikher, former Dean of Music at the University of Denver, and President of the Western Institute of Music, and Mrs. Elizabeth Ann (Williams) Schweikher.

He was graduated from the East Denver High School in Denver where another noted Yale faculty member, Chauncey B. Tinker, Professor Emeritus of English Literature, received his high school training.

Mr. Schweikher enrolled in the College of Engineering of the University of Colorado in 1921 but by the next year had changed into the field of his choice, architecture.

He went to Chicago where he became a draftsman in 1922 with the firm of Granger and Bollenbacher, attending night classes at the Art Institute, the Illinois Institute of Technology and the Chicago Atelier until 1927 when he enrolled in Yale, receiving his Bacheolr of Fine Arts degree in 1929.

He immediately entered the architectural field, serving as assistant designer, and chief of design and site planning with three Chicago firms before starting his own business, first with Architect Theodore W. Lamb and then with Winston Elting.

He served in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1945, rising from Lieutenant (jg) to Lieutenant Commander. During the last months of his commission he was Officer in Charge of the Division of Arts and Monuments, Civil Affairs Staging Area, Monterey, Calif.

Mr. Schweikher served as Visiting Professor of Architecture at Yale in 1947-48 and again in 1950-51, and 1952-53. He has also held visiting professorships and lectureships at the Universities of Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, and at Washington University, St. Louis, the School of The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Arizona State Teachers College.

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Regional Directors at A.I.A. Convention

Architectural activity throughout most of the nation remains at 1952's high level, according to reports from twelve Regional Directors who attended the convention.

Schools are the leading building type in all twelve regions, followed closely by industrial and commercial work in the majority of the areas covered. Residential activity is still strong and successful building fund drives by numerous religious groups are reflected in eight regions where church work is substantial.

While many directors reported substantial backlogs of work concern was expressed that higher interest rates and the general tight money situation might affect future building projects. Evidence that the increased interest rates have already cut down residential building in some sections was given. One director predicted that proposed reduction of Hill-Burton funds would result in stoppage of work on hospitals already under construction. In general, however, the feeling was one of cautious optimism.

The Regional Directors reporting on conditions and trends of architectural activity throughout the nation were: Gulf States District — Howard Eichenbaum, Little Rock, Arkansas; Great Lakes District — John N. Richards, Toledo, Ohio; Middle Atlantic District — C. E. Silling, Charleston, West Virginia; Northwest District — Irving G. Smith, Portland, Oregon; Central States District — Leonard H. Bailey, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; South Atlantic District — G. Thomas Harmon, III, Columbia, South Carolina; Sierra Nevada District — Charles O. Matcham, Los Angeles, California; Texas District — Edward L. Wilson, Fort Worth, Texas; New England District — Philip D. Creer, Providence, Rhode Island; New York District — C. Storrs Barrows, Rochester, New York; North Central States District — Edgar H. Berners, Green Bay, Wisconsin, and Western Mountain District—W. Gordon Jamieson, Denver, Colorado.

The national Council of Architectural Boards concluded three years of work at the convention by adopting a revised syllabus for uniform state examination procedure.

If the recommended syllabus is ratified by local state boards, the new syllabus will ease inter-state registration, as of January 1, 1954. The Council agreed, if 10 or more states fail to adopt the recommendations, all members will be notified and the syllabus will be committed to further study.

President Charles E. Firestone, Canton, Ohio, summed up the Council action in a formal statement:

"Through exchange of ideas and experiences, a forward step towards a uniform examination for all the individual states of the Union has been made through which the architects will be able to render a better service to the general public for the protection of life, health, and property and the advancement of good architecture."

All officers of the Council were re-elected as follows: Mr. Firestone, President; Fred L. Markham, Provo, Utah, first vice-president; Bartlett Cocke, San Antonio, Texas, second vice-president; Edgar H. Berners, Green Bay, Wisconsin, third vice-president; William L. Perkins, Chariton, Iowa, secretary-treasurer.

Open Letter on Starting of Clearing House for Bid Openings To Architects and Professional Engineers

GENTLEMEN:

At a meeting of the Joint Cooperative Committee of the Wisconsin Architects Association and A. G. C. held in Madison this month final arrangements were made to start operating a Clearing House to establish, if possible, non-conflicting dates for bid openings in the state of Wisconsin outside of Milwaukee County.

This Clearing House will be located at the office of the Wisconsin Chapter of A. G. C., Jackman Building, Janesville, Wisconsin, Telephone 6689.

The architects have been polled on this matter and the Board of Directors of both organizations have approved the following procedure, which they sincerely hope will be supported 100 per cent by the architects and engineers.

Approximately 30 to 60 days prior to the time that the architect or engineer is scheduled to complete plans and specifications for a private or public project exceeding $25,000.00 in cost they may contact the Clearing House Office stating approximately when they would like to advertise for bids. The Clearing House will answer promptly advising the architect or engineer of other projects already scheduled for opening in that general territory in order that a date may be set for the opening that will not conflict with other projects.

On many occasions projects have been released where a contractor would like to figure the job but by virtue of other work on which they had decided to bid, opening at approximately the same time, they were unable to submit a proposal. The architect and engineer, as well as the owner in this case, would fail to receive bids from competent contractors qualified to do the work, and the contractor himself would miss out on bidding a project which to him might appear attractive.

The Committee feels this will be a tremendous help to the industry as we propose every week or two to send to our Active and Associate Members, who are subcontractors as well as material and equipment vendors, a list of proposed work coming out in the immediate future. This will, of course, assist them in their work in supplying the architect, engineer and contractor with data, bids, etc. well in advance of bidding and, in many cases, in advance of final completion of plans and specifications.

This procedure has been put in operation in other parts of the country and proven itself to be very helpful to all segments of the industry.

The Wisconsin Chapter of A. G. C. has agreed to finance the entire operation of this Clearing House, at least until it is well established, and proved itself, after which if the expenses become too great the architects anticipate giving the Clearing House financial assistance.

This office would deeply appreciate a prompt response from the architects and engineers stating that they will give the Clearing House their whole hearted support in an endeavor to make it work as near per-

KOHLER

Kitchen Sinks of Enameled Iron

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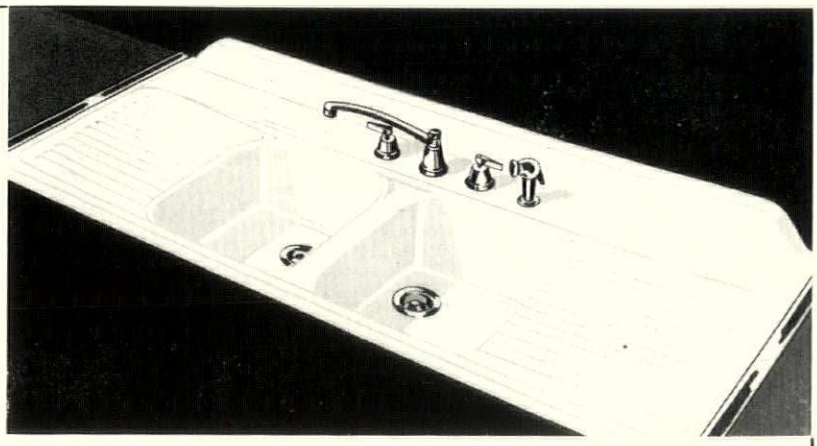

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fect as possible. We would also welcome any constructive suggestions which you might have to offer.

Information sent to this office should indicate the name and approximate size of the project in dollars, type of construction, location, etc.

Looking forward to hearing from you promptly advising us of work you have already scheduled, or anticipate scheduling within the next few months, so that we may get the Clearing House in operation as rapidly as possible, I remain

Very truly yours,
J. HARRY GREEN,
Secretary, Joint Cooperative Committee AIA-AGC

JOINT COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A. I. A.	A. G. C.
Julius Sandstedt, Oshkosh	M. B. Findorff, Madison
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Emiel F. Klingler, Eau Claire	Leslie G. Miller, Fond du Lac
Paul E. Nystrom, Madison	Alt.—H. C. Trester, Oshkosh
Walter M. Trapp, Milwaukee	C. H. Abbott, Marshfield
	Alt.—D. E. Thomsen, Marshfield

Julius Sandstedt, *Chairman*

J. Harry Green, *Secretary*

New Address for E. F. Klingler & Associates

What every architect would like . . . a parking lot all his own.

From E. F. Klingler & Associates, Eau Claire, comes the announcement that they are now located on the second floor of their New Office Building at 121½ West Grand Avenue, Phone: 2-3416. And, the announcement adds, "For your convenience, we will have our own parking lot at the rear of our building."

On the announcement card is a small map showing the exact location of the new E. F. Klingler Building and the PARKING LOT.

* * *

The July Bulletin of the Appleton Chamber of Commerce contains the following item of interest:

The Building Ordinance, which Carl Schroeder, Herman Hoeppner, Vilas Gehin, Elmer Root, Al Utschig, Maurey Lee Allen, of the Wisconsin Architects Association, and Walter Bogan presented to the Mayor and City Council many months ago, has now gone through the final phases of governmental procedure and should become law within the next few weeks, or should we say the next month or so and be sure. Any way it will be a good ordinance and one that will be modern compared with the one Messrs. Schroeder and company started out with at the beginning of their study.

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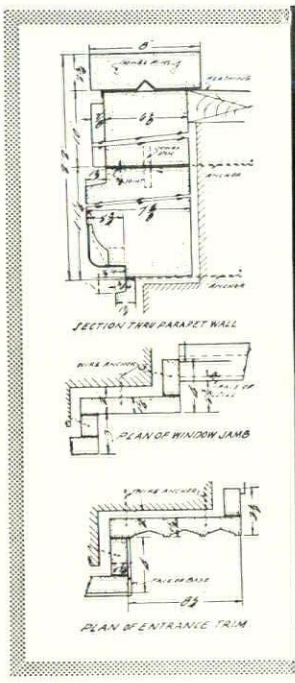

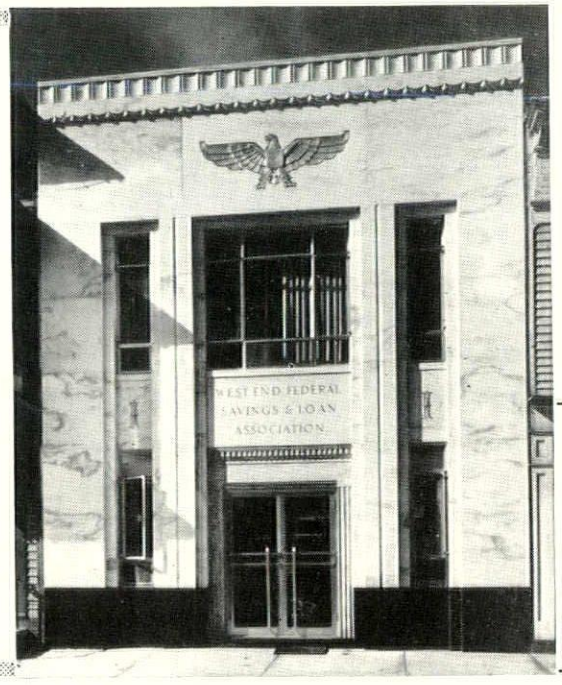

Marble Veneer Treatment for the main wall, with heavier construction in the parapet are here combined for an effect that is both substantial and economical. Polished Vermont Verde Antique provides a base course of pleasing contrast with main wall; it also is resistant to discoloration from the sidewalk. The beautiful veining of Standard White Danby gives distinction to the entire front of the building.

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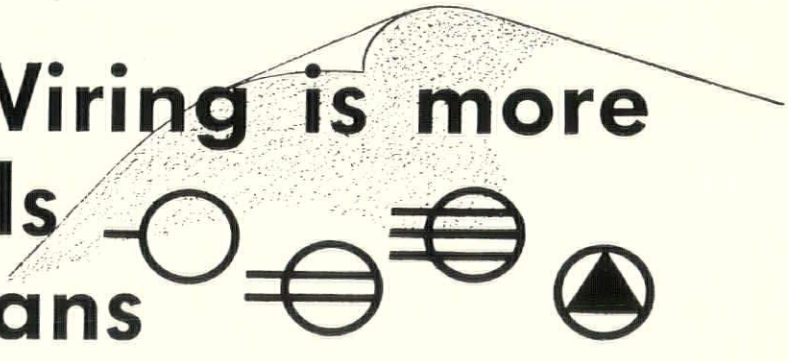
Adequate Wiring is more than symbols on plans



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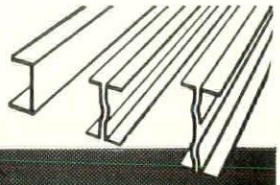

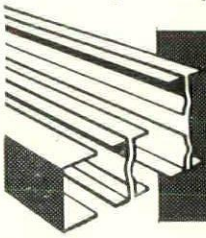

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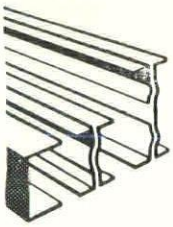

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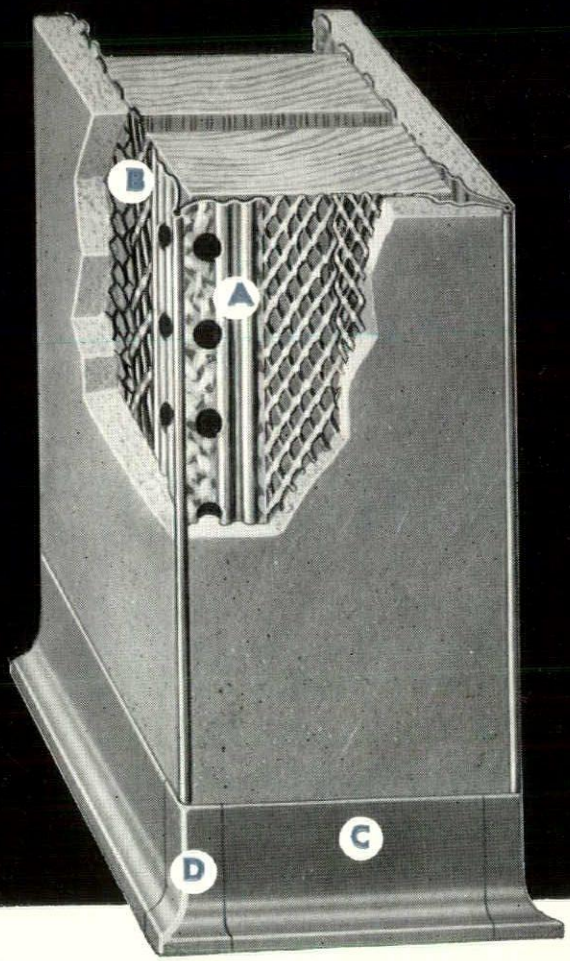

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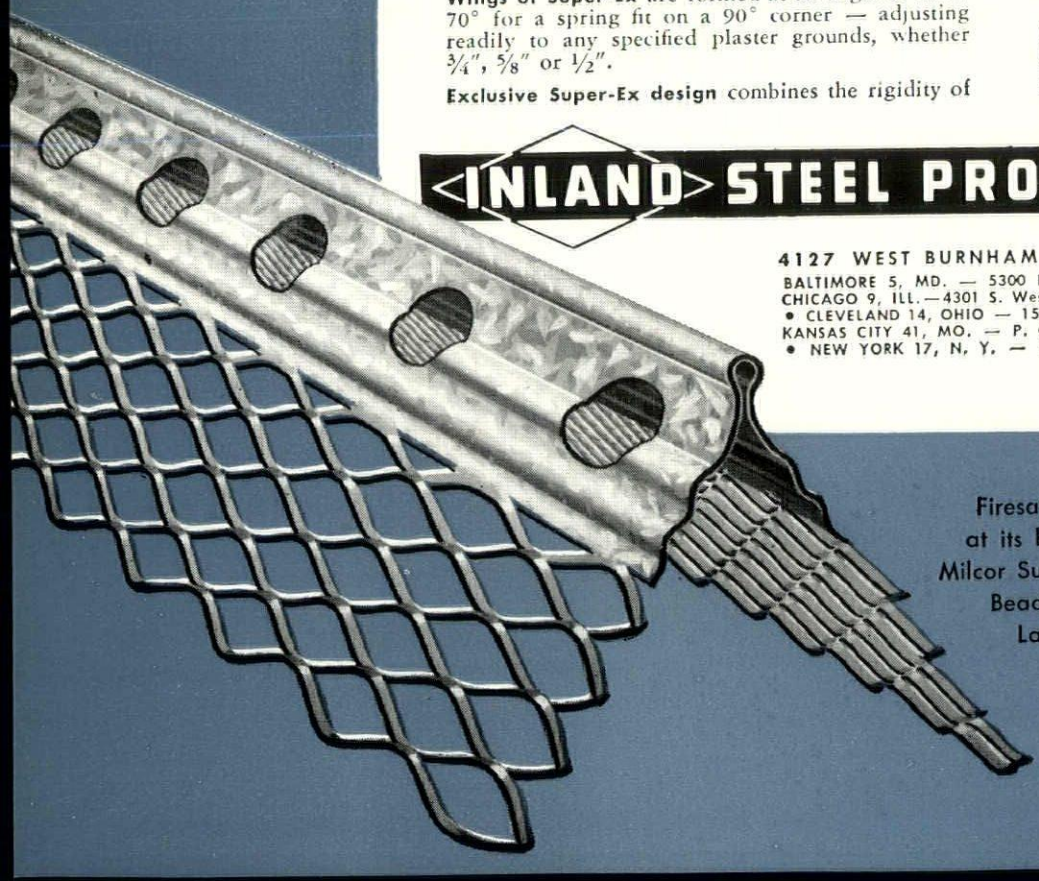
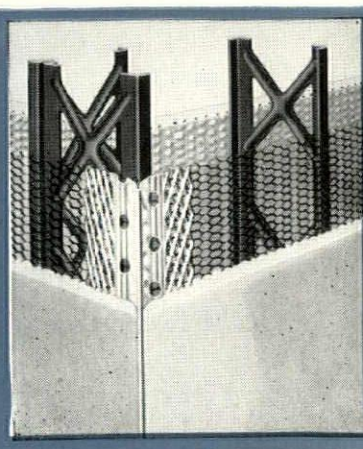
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